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SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

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SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:  
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- [1](#)1. Mideast
- [1](#)2. Anti-Terrorism Efforts
- [1](#)3. One Year after ObamaQs Election

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Key stories in the media:  
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The media reported on the first anniversary of President ObamaQs

election.

Israel Radio quoted Secretary of State Hillary Clinton as explaining in an interview with Al Jazeera-TV why negotiations with Israel, even without the total settlement freeze, was ultimately good for the Palestinian people to assuage Arab anger and clarify the U.S. position to the Islamic world.. Clinton was quoted as saying that the settlement issue will be resolved when the borders of the Palestinian state are drawn. Israel Radio quoted the Secretary as saying in another interview that every step taken by the Israeli Government is Qunprecedented.

Leading media quoted PM Benjamin Netanyahu as saying yesterday that Hamas missiles capable of hitting Tel Aviv would endanger the Qwhole world but above all, they threaten our civilians, our cities.Q He was speaking during a visit to the headquarters of the Juniper Cobra joint U.S.-Israel defense exercise. Major media reported that a few hours earlier, Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhum issued a new statement saying the Israeli announcement was aimed to influence world public opinion ahead of the U.N. debate on the Goldstone report. Barhum was quoted as saying that the diplomatic crisis triggered by the report "has led the Zionist enemy to make up excuses in an attempt to instigate public opinion against Hamas."

The Yediot-linked Web site Ynet reported that Jerusalem expects Washington to exercise its right of veto in the UN should the international body's Arab bloc be able to get it to vote on deferring the Goldstone report to the Security Council. Ynet reported that yesterday Deputy FM Daniel Ayalon confirmed that Israel and the U.S. have come to a "silent understanding" that that the latter will veto a decision to have the matter heard by Security Council. The Jerusalem Post quoted Ayalon as saying yesterday that it was a mistake to reduce the complex questions that divide Israelis and Palestinians to one concrete problem such as the settlements. Leading media reported that yesterday Foreign Ministry Director-General Yossi Gal told ambassadors that support for the Goldstone report would have a negative effect on the peace process and undermine democraciesQ right to self-defense. Ynet quoted Jerusalem sources as saying that the General Assembly is likely to defer the matter to the Security Council nonetheless and despite considerable effort to thwart the move. The Jerusalem Post reported that EU countries are hammering details of an initiative that would amend the existing resolution and send the matter back to Geneva. Leading media reported that yesterday the House of Representatives approved a nonbinding resolution rebuking the Goldstone report. The resolution, which passed 344-36, called the investigation of the conflict Qto be irredeemably biased and unworthy of further consideration or legitimacy.Q Twenty-two House members voted QpresentQ on the resolution. Israel Hayom and other media reported that two Jewish groups -- J Street and Americans for Peace Now -- expressed reservations about the resolution, saying that it should include calls on Israel and Hamas to conduct independent investigations into Operation Cast Lead.

Leading media reported that last night, 150 km from Israeli shores, Special IDF Forces arrested a commercial ship carrying the Antigua flag, on which there were large quantities of weapons. The weapons were camouflaged as civilian goods. After an initial examination by the combatants, it was taken to a port in Israel. Israel Radio quoted Israeli military sources as saying that the weapons originated from Iran and were intended for Hizbullah. Commentators cited a possible rift between Syria and Iran as a reason for IranQs direct supply of weapons to Hizbullah.

The media reported that yesterday rioting settlers forced a Palestinian family out of their home in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah, after the Jerusalem District Court denied the residents' appeal to remain on the premises. Shortly after the verdict was passed dozens of settlers stormed into the house with hired security guards, demanding that the family vacate immediately. A violent riot erupted between the settlers and the neighborhood's Palestinian residents. Leading media reported that the home is one of 28 properties in the neighborhood that are the subject of an ongoing legal battle between Jewish claimants and the Palestinian families who live there. Israel Radio cited a statement by U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that he was "dismayed at continued Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem, including the demolition of Palestinian homes, the eviction of Palestinian

families and the insertion of settlers into Palestinian neighborhoods." He described the East Jerusalem event as "just the most recent incident", adding that "these actions stoke tensions, cause suffering and further undermine trust." Several media reported increasing Egyptian condemnation of Israel's actions in East Jerusalem.

Yediot quoted Palestinian media as saying over the past few days that progress has been made in efforts to have Gilad Shalit released. The newspaper quoted a Gaza news agency as saying that the deal is 95% complete. Yediot quoted diplomatic sources in Jerusalem as saying that it is an unsurprising spin by Hamas for domestic purposes -- as internal polls suggest that Hamas is weakening in its struggle with Fatah. The sources admitted that there has been some progress, but that we are not on the eve of an agreement. Makor Rishon-Hatzofe reported that yesterday, in a precedent-setting ruling, the High Court of Justice instructed the state to base its decisions regarding the release of terrorists on their chances of resuming terrorist activities.

Israel Hayom reported that Kadima Knesset Member Shaul Mofaz's peace plan [which was reported yesterday by Maariv] threatens to split Kadima. Party chair Tzipi Livni is opposed to Mofaz's proposal that a Palestinian state be immediately established in interim borders and that the core issues be postponed. Livni favors granting Palestinian statehood at the conclusion of the negotiations.

The Jerusalem Post reported that senior officials from aerospace giant Lockheed Martin were in Israel yesterday for talks with the Defense Ministry, in an effort to convince Israel to overcome concerns and go ahead with plans to purchase the fifth-generation F-35 stealth fighter jet. According to senior defense officials, Lockheed Martin is concerned that Israel will not follow through with its initial plan to sign a contract for some 25 aircraft in the coming months. Officials were quoted as saying yesterday that the target date for a contract at the beginning of 2010 would likely not be met. As a result, the arrival of the aircraft -- initially predicted to begin in 2014 -- would likely be postponed by at least one or two years. If the contract is not signed, there are concerns that other countries will follow suit and possibly slow down their procurement plans as well.

Yediot reported that for the past 10 days the Israeli Foreign Ministry has complained to The New York Times over the American paper's biased and unfair reporting vis-à-vis Israel. Yesterday the Israeli delegation to the U.N. conveyed this complaint to The New York Times. The Israeli protest revolves around negative subjective language about Israel and fabricated formulations that cause the innocent reader to believe that the Goldstone report found hard evidence that Israel carried out war crimes in Gaza.

The Jerusalem Post reported that former President of Tel Aviv University and former Ambassador to the U.S. Itamar Rabinovich and Al Quds University President Sari Nusseibeh were in Frankfurt, Germany this week to jointly receive the Korn and Gestermann Foundation Freedom Prize that is given every three years to people who have contributed significantly to peace in the Middle East. In accepting the prize Rabinovich said that the two sides must reach an accommodation as quickly as possible because time is working against them.

Leading media cited police suspicions that Yaakov (Jack) Teitel, who has confessed to murdering two Palestinians and carrying out a long list of other, less deadly, terror attacks, also murdered two traffic policemen in the Jordan Valley eight months ago -- a crime originally attributed to Palestinian terrorists. Media reported that yesterday Yosef Spinoza, a neighbor of Teitel, was arrested at their Shvut Rahel settlement. He is suspected of having known about some of Teitel's actions. Spinoza was also detained for questioning about two weeks ago, but was released several hours later.

Haaretz reported that following intense pressure from ultra-Orthodox parties Shas and United Torah Judaism (UTJ), the Government is expected to submit a bill to the Knesset today that would increase the number of deputy mayors in Jerusalem to eight. This would essentially provide ultra-Orthodox parties with two more municipal-paying jobs -- one for Shas and the other for UTJ.

Major media bannered a letter sent yesterday by State Prosecutor

Moshe Lador to Justice Minister Yaakov NeQeman in which he blasted NeQeman for his proposal to split the attorney general's role in two, so that the same person would no longer serve as both head of the prosecution and the government's legal advisor. The proposal, which Lador termed a "silent revolution," will not only weaken the attorney general, but will also dismantle the prosecution, he charged. The media cited NeQeman's response that Lador, a civil servant, had crossed a red line.

HaQaretz reported that, nearly 15 years after it was founded, the Israeli data security firm Finjan Software has been sold to the U.S. firm M86 Security in a share-swap deal. Finjan has raised \$80 million over its lifetime. Under the agreement, M86 acquires Finjan's global operations, products, and technology, which merge into M86 Security, effective immediately.

The Jerusalem Post cited the results of a poll commissioned by Independent Media Review and Analysis and conducted last week by the Maagar Mohot polling company: a majority of Israeli Jews distrust Palestinian and generally Arab willingness to make peace and have a similar distrust for the efficacy of multinational forces as guarantors of a future agreement. Asked whether the assertion that a complete withdrawal to the pre-1967 border would bring peace -- the central plank of the Arab peace initiative -- was "simplistic and naive" or "logical and correct," Israeli Jews responded 80% to 10% in favor of the former option. This opinion was shared across much of the Israeli political spectrum, with a majority of Labor voters (60%) and overwhelming majorities of Kadima (85%), Likud (93%), ultra-Orthodox (80%) and right-wing (96%) party voters expressing this view.

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1. Mideast:  
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Block Quotes:  
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#### 1. "Stop Treading Water"

The independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized (11/4): QA year after Barack Obama's election as president of the United States, it has become clear that with regard to the Israeli-Arab conflict, the change he promised boils down to high-flown rhetoric and a confused policy. Instead of restarting negotiations on a final-status agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, and promoting the two-state solution with all his might, the world's greatest power is treading water in the swamp of the settlements.... The crisis of trust between Netanyahu and Abbas, and the huge gap between their positions, necessitates a determined and consistent American stance whose goal is to restart the negotiations and conclude them, instead of wasting time and prestige in endless discussions over empty formulas for limiting settlement construction. It is not enough to urge the prime minister to bolster Abbas in order to keep the West Bank from falling into the hands of Hamas. The time has come for Obama to summon both sides for serious, continuous negotiations, accompanied by a timetable for establishing a Palestinian state alongside Israel on the basis of the June 4, 1967 borders. There could be no clearer expression of the United States' commitment to Israel's security and its future as a Jewish and democratic state.

#### II. "HamasQ Doomsday Weapon"

Palestinian affairs correspondent Avi Issacharoff and military correspondent Amos Harel wrote in HaQaretz (11/4): QMaj. Gen. Amos Yadlin, director of Military Intelligence, announced yesterday that Hamas launched a rocket some 60 kilometers into the sea, apparently as an experiment. Such a rocket ... could ... possibly reach as far as Tel Aviv.... Yadlin's announcement should be seen as part of an attempt by the military to prepare the public for a new attack against the Strip. The General Staff is not remotely eager for another round, especially with the Goldstone report conclusions

still haunting commanders of the previous operation when they travel abroad. Hamas, for its part, is in no hurry for a confrontation either. Gaza has not yet recovered from the devastation of Cast Lead, and the organization knows it would pay in heavy casualties if the conflict reignites. What Israel should be doing in the meantime is improving its anti-missile defense systems.

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## 12. Anti-Terrorism Efforts:

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### Block Quotes:

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"Obama Is Learning from the IDF"

Diplomatic correspondent Aluf Benn wrote in HaQaretz (11/4): QIsrael's critics in the United States portray it as a strategic burden. They argue that during the Cold War there was value in cooperating with the IDF, which gave the Americans useful information on Soviet weapons systems used by Arab armies. But the Soviet Union collapsed and all the value Israel offered to U.S. national security evaporated with it. These critics are wrong in a big way: the U.S. military effort against al-Qaida and the Taliban is based on a doctrine developed by Israel. The IDF was a global leader in targeting terrorists from the air. When Israel embarked on its assassinations policy in the summer of 2001, the United States condemned it. Several weeks later the Twin Towers were brought down in a terrorist attack and Washington's approach changed. Instead of condemning Israel, the Americans simply copied its methods, foreign sources say. Unmanned combat air vehicles (UCAVs), armed with missiles, started being used to kill terrorists, first in Yemen and later in Afghanistan and Pakistan. U.S. President Barack Obama has proved to be an enthusiastic student of the doctrine of targeted killings, even more than his predecessor George W. Bush.... It would be interesting to know if Obama, who is due to decide on the future of the war in Afghanistan, knows from whom the Americans have learned the modern doctrine of antiterrorism warfare, and whether he is grateful to the IDF.

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## 13. One Year after ObamaQs Election:

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### Block Quotes:

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"He Can"

Correspondent Nadav Eyal wrote in the popular, pluralist Maariv (11/4): QIt has become fashionable to be disappointed by Obama. Those who like to be disappointed are those who never loved him; hardcore right-wing Americans always suspected him, to say nothing about parts of the Israeli public; Obama undoubtedly turned out to be a green president -- at least as far as foreign relations are concerned.... [However,] Obama can score a key achievement in the Middle East: he succeeded in pushing Netanyahu to the wall and force him to utter the phrase QPalestinian state.Q On the other hand, pressuring Netanyahu isnQt a big challenge. One can understand why, even in the U.S. -- a country that sanctifies rewarding people, optimism, and patriotism -- the Nobel Prize awarded to the President was recently spurned. There is truth in this criticism, but it misses the point. In short, Obama is succeeding on the important arena -- the economy.... A letdown? It is still early to say that Obama is a disappointment. There is one indication of his success: the American Right reacts hysterically. It can be assumed that this is not because Obama failed, but because he has been successful.